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Inside

# CONNECTICUT POST

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## Mom 'squashed' Marine dream

**Friends speak:** Nancy Lanza discouraged son from serving in military

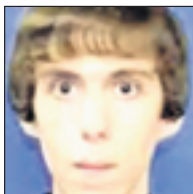
By MariAn Gail Brown

NEWTOWN — Adam Lanza aspired to be a Marine, one of "the few, the proud."  
Failing that, he planned to join another branch of the military.  
That is what he told his mother, Nancy, his biggest cheerleader, and that is what she relayed to one of her closest friends, Ellen Adriani, of Sandy Hook.  
At first, Nancy Lanza supported her youngest son's dream. She liked the idea that the military would give him purpose, a career path and

structure to his life. But the more she thought about it, the more she saw a downside.  
"It became overwhelmingly clear to her that it (military service) wasn't right for him," Adriani said. "She squashed" any notion of Adam joining the Marines or any branch of the armed services by reminding him "that he didn't like to be touched," said Adriani, and that if he were injured, "doctors and medics would have to handle him to treat him."  
Lanza, 20, harbored a dream of joining the military after he stopped



Nancy Lanza



Adam Lanza

taking courses at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, said a local merchant who knew Nancy and her son.  
Lanza first made his military aspirations known when he was 17, about the time his older brother, Ryan, was

attending Quinnipiac University in Hamden.  
The Adam Lanza who went on a shooting rampage at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown last Friday was outfitted for war. Only his targets were civilian, not military.  
He was clad in body armor, black clothing and wielding a Bushmaster rifle, equivalent to a military M-16. He was also armed with a 9mm Glock originally used by the Austrian military — and hundreds of rounds of ammunition.

See Killer on A2



Mike Ross/For the Connecticut Post

Right, an FDNY firefighter and his son exit the funeral of Daniel Barden outside St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown. Above, a casket carrying the body of teacher Victoria Soto, 27, leaves Lordship Community Church in Stratford.

## Sandy Hook students will feel right at home in Monroe

By Eileen FitzGerald

MONROE — When Sandy Hook Elementary students go to their new school in January, they will see a replica of their familiar surroundings.  
Hundreds of workers — plumbers, painters, electricians, parents, teachers, laborers — are feverishly working to make Chalk Hill School look like Sandy Hook.

On Wednesday, some students visited their new school and retrieved personal belongings left at Sandy Hook on Friday.  
"After meeting many Sandy Hook Elementary children with their parents today, all I can say is they were all very happy to be getting 'their stuff back,'" Monroe First Selectman Steve Vavrek said on his Facebook page Wednesday.  
See Sandy Hook on A2

### Inside

» **Funerals:** Sandy Hook Elementary School principal, hero teacher among those remembered at services. **A3**  
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Brian A. Pounds/Staff photographer

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Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from Our Family to Yours

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TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

Killer discouraged from joining Marines

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Lanza was a familiar face at area shooting ranges in recent years, federal agents said, but not in the past six months. Nevertheless, he had ample opportunity to hone his skills firing off as many virtual rounds as he wanted in the comfort of his own home.

It was clear he was an avid gamer from the trove of gory video and Internet gaming material investigators seized.

Peter Wlasuk, a Newtown plumber who claims he worked at the Lanzas' home, informed The Sun of London that Lanza would play soldier in violent video games such as "Call of Duty" for hours in a windowless, bunker-like basement.

"They had one poster of every piece of military equipment the U.S. ever made," Wlasuk told the British newspaper.

Lanza's dreams are hauntingly similar to another school shooter, Eric Harris, who along with Dylan Klebold killed 12 people at Columbine High School in Colorado in 1999.

Harris had hoped to join the Marines, too, according to the Rocky Mountain News. Five days before the shootings, a recruiter told Harris he wasn't eligible for military service because he had used psychiatric medicine. Like Harris, Lanza enjoyed playing violent computer and video games.

All three weapons Lanza used when he stormed Sandy Hook Elementary School were lawfully owned and registered to his mother, who grew up on a New Hampshire farm where she learned early how to shoot and handle guns.

Adriani visited Lanza's girlhood home last October, when the two of them attended a retirement party for Lanza's brother, James Champion, a police officer.

"She was a real farm girl," Adriani said, and had a respect for firearms.



Brian A. Pounds/Staff photographer

Mourners enter past lines of firefighters outside the funeral for Daniel Barden, one of the 20 children killed in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, at St. Rose of Lima Church in Newtown on Wednesday.

"She was one of the most responsible people I know. She kept them locked up. She was safety conscious in every aspect of her life. If you got into her BMW and didn't buckle up, as soon as the car started making that ding-ding-ding sound she'd stop driving and wouldn't start until you were safely buckled in."

Adriani met Nancy Lanza several years ago at the My Place restaurant in Newtown, where a number of their mutual friends hang out. The two shared a passion for gardening and good food.

Lanza was a familiar face at area shooting ranges in recent years, federal agents said, but not in the past six months. Nevertheless, he had ample opportunity to hone his skills firing off as many virtual rounds as he wanted in the comfort of his own home.

All of what Adriani knows of Adam Lanza, she concedes, she learned from his mother, whom police said he shot in the head. He then drove to the school to kill 20 children and six

women before killing himself.

"Nancy was proud of both of her sons," Adriani said. "They were the world to her. Adam had been doing some computer work

for someone I know. He was incredibly bright. And Nancy was looking into some schools for him and the possibility of moving, too."

As he progressed through the school system, he did well academically, but socially he was an outcast.

When anyone passed him in the hallway between classes, fellow classmates say, he would press himself against the wall, shunning even inadvertent physical contact.

Whether Adam Lanza was depressed about giving up his military dream

or resuming his education, Adriani said she has no idea.

In the past year or so, Nancy Lanza had started traveling more, leaving him home alone more often, Adriani said. And Adam Lanza had started taking on more responsibility at home, grocery shopping and venturing out alone.

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Staff writers Brian Lockhart and Tom Cleary contributed to this story.

Sandy Hook students to feel right at home in Monroe school

Continued from A1

"They all had a policeman walk with them as they saw their classrooms and their desks. The biggest hits were their new gym, library and cafeteria spaces."

When Chalk Hill opens sometime after the holidays, more than 500 students at the Sandy Hook school will attend the Monroe school. Newtown officials still must decide the future of the Sandy Hook building after the horrific shooting there Friday.

The school's principal, Dawn Hochsprung, was slain as she attempted to stop the gunman. Twenty-year-old Adam Lanza shot to death 20 students and six teachers and administrators. Earlier in the day, Lanza had killed his mother. He turned his gun on himself at the school as police swarmed the building.

Donna Page, retired principal of Sandy Hook Elementary, has agreed to help with the transition for as long as she is needed, according to officials.

Chalk Hill, last used by Monroe fourth- and fifth-graders in the 2010-11 school year, will have the same paint scheme

as Sandy Hook Elementary. The same pictures and posters will be on the walls. Desks will be arranged in a familiar pattern. Even touches as small as where crayons normally are will be kept in mind.

Also, officials are installing a state-of-the-art security and communication system.

"When they walk into the classroom, it's going to be their classroom," Vavrek said in an interview.

Joseph Cirasuolo, executive director of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, said the work on the school has been moving along rapidly.

Having retired principal Page to help will be good because the staff knows her, he said.

"All the advice we get is that the sooner you get the teachers and the students into a normal school setting the better," Cirasuolo said.

Vavrek said workers have taken dozens of photos of the rooms at Sandy Hook and are duplicating the paint scheme, hanging up the same pictures and posters — in the same arrangement — and setting



Workers and volunteers are setting up Chalk Hill Middle School in Monroe for use by students from Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown in early January.

up the desks in the same way. He said if a student had crayons on her desk a certain way, they will be set up identically when he or she returns.

Chalk Hill is being repainted in Sandy Hook's colors, green and white, and there are reports that Madison Square Garden has offered to donate a new gymnasium floor for the school.

"They're going to go back to a normal school — as normal as it can be," Vavrek said.

A lot of infrastructure improvements, such as wiring and plumbing,

needed to be made, Vavrek said.

School officials are also working to have the Sandy Hook preschool and afterschool programs ready when classes resume, though a location has not been confirmed. Education Connection, the regional education support agency for Newtown, runs the program.

"We are ready to open our program as soon as we know where it will be located," Education Connection executive director Danitu Thibodeau said Wednesday.

While he wouldn't dis-

cuss specifics, Vavrek said the security at Chalk Hill will be "state of the art" and include an extensive network of video cameras. Other security details, such as police protection, are being worked out.

He said "hundreds" of people have been working virtually nonstop at the school — carpenters, painters, plumbers, electricians, laborers, HVAC crews, members of parent groups. Cell towers have been erected behind the school. The state has waived all of the normal regulatory requirements.

As for a budget, Vavrek

said Gov. Dannel P. Malloy has told him to spend what is needed.

After the school was closed, Chalk Hill was used by the town's parks department and an EMS crew. The town was on the verge of allowing local theater and ballet groups to use it.

Bethel Cub Scoutmaster Keith Watson is leading an effort to collect school supplies for Chalk Hill. He said three boys who died in the shooting and eight of the 12 girls were Scouts.

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Contributed photos



TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN

# Heroes, angels mourned

Paul Simon sang “The Sound of Silence” for “Vicki” Leigh Soto, the teacher who died defending her kids. Scores of firefighters lined the street to salute Daniel Barden, the little boy who wanted to fight fires when he grew up. Luminaries spelled a single word — “hope” — outside the wake for Dawn Hochsprung, the fearless principal. Chase Kowalski was remembered for his love of sports and his youthful exuberance, Charlotte Bacon for her love of animals and all things pink. They came by the hundreds to say goodbye, to celebrate the lives of six of those who were slain at Sandy Hook Elementary that day.

Nearly 300 people listen to funeral services outside of Lordship Community Church on Wednesday for Victoria Soto, the first-grade teacher at Sandy Hook Elementary School who was killed while protecting her students.

Mike Ross/For Hearst Connecticut Newspapers



VICTORIA LEIGH SOTO

## ‘Sound of Silence’ lays hero teacher to rest

By Keila Torres Ocasio

STRATFORD — Clad in green ties, sweaters and scarfs, Victoria Leigh Soto’s loved ones gave heartfelt tributes Wednesday to the blue-eyed teacher who died trying to protect her students during last week’s mass shooting in Newtown.

Hundreds of mourners gathered at Lordship Community Church to say farewell to the young woman, known as “Vicki,” who loved dancing, flamingos, crispy macaroni and cheese and cupcake eating contests. The service included a touching performance by Paul Simon, a New Canaan resident, who played “Sound of Silence” on an acoustic guitar.

Jillian Soto said her sister Vicki, whose favorite color was green, has been called a hero for hiding the students in her first-grade class and telling the shooter they were somewhere else. “But truthfully you have been a hero to me for a lot longer than five days,” she said, reading from a letter she wrote.

Jillian said she copied everything her sister did and decided to attend Eastern Connecticut State University the moment her older sister enrolled. Vicki graduated from Eastern with high honors and degrees in education and history and was pursuing her master’s degree at Southern Connecticut



State University. “Please guide me as I try to take on this world without you,” Jillian said.

Another sibling, Carlee Soto, cried as she recalled the last time she saw her 27-year-old sister, one week ago. The two got scolded by their mother for playfully throwing candy at each other. Carlee, who called the pain of losing her sister “unbelievable,” said their mother was worried Vicki’s dog Roxie would eat the candy and get sick.

Roxie, according to Soto’s obituary, would wait for her to come home every day and “is still waiting, lost without her.”

A common thread throughout the service was Soto’s love of Christmas. A cousin said Soto insisted on having a family gathering each Christmas Eve. Her aunt and godmother Debbie Cronk, said she gave Soto a new Christmas ornament each year to help build up a collection for the day she got a place of her own. Cronk said she bought one last ornament Soto could take with her to heaven.

With the church sanctuary filled to capacity, hundreds of mourners stood on the small white church’s lawn listening to the service through speakers set up outside. When the dark gray casket arrived, the state police Honor Guard gave a salute to the teacher who gave her life to protect her class.

DANIEL BARDEN, 7

## A firefighter’s funeral for a boy

By Linda Conner Lambeck

NEWTOWN — Daniel Barden, 7, never got the chance to grow up and become a firefighter, but Wednesday he got a firefighter’s funeral.

More than 100 firefighters from New York City, Simsbury, New London, Lyme and elsewhere, lined the long driveway on both sides, from the curb to the large wooden doors of Saint Rose of Lima Church. They stood at attention in dress uniform as his grief-stricken family passed by in the funeral procession. Some played bagpipes.

“We came here to show support,” said John Cummings of Ladder Co. 45 in New York City and treasurer of the NYC Firefighters Brotherhood Association. Daniel had cousins who are New York City firefighters. Most got text messages Tuesday telling them Daniel wanted to be a firefighter, too. “We’re



here to show our support for this community like our community was deeply affected after 9/11. We’re here to return the favor,” said Lt. Eddy Boles, another NYC firefighter.

The church was packed with mourners for the 10 a.m. service. Friends, family, neighbors and classmates were all there.

Laura Stamberg and daughter Sarah, 16, came an hour and half away from New Paltz, N.Y. Laura’s husband and Daniel’s father Mark used to play in a band together. The last time she saw Daniel, he was very small.

“I heard he loved to play the drums,” said Stamberg, her face fighting back tears on a morning where the sun was shining, but the wind was bitter.

NYC firefighter Kevin Morrow said Daniel’s brother talked about how “Daniel inspired everyone around him to be happy.”

CHARLOTTE BACON, 6

## Remembering a girl’s love of pink

By Robert Miller

NEWTOWN — Charlotte Bacon was remembered Thursday as a spirited, warm-hearted little girl who loved the color pink and any animal she met.

A memorial service was held for the 6-year-old girl at Christ the King Lutheran Church.

Those at her service each received a button with her likeness and a program with a cover that featured an angel superimposed over a sheet filled with the name “Charlotte.”

Linda Clark, a town resident who attended the service, said Charlotte’s mother, JoAnn, described her daughter as an exuberant, bubbly child who was willing to argue for the things that appealed to her.

“She said her daughter would say “I want it, I want it,” Clark said. “Then it would be ‘I need it, I need it.’ ”



Clark said that JoAnn Bacon also brought up her daughter’s love of pink. Previous reports have told how Charlotte, getting a pink dress and pink boots for Christmas, could not wait until Dec. 25 to show them off. She wore them to school the day of the shooting.

Clark and Adel Joobeur said family members spoke of Charlotte’s love of all animals. The Bacons’ pet golden retriever, the two said, was especially favored.

“They said he was a member of the family,” Joobeur said.

And Clark said, there was an acceptance at the service of Charlotte’s destination.

“Her mother said she was in heaven,” Clark said.

The service was attended by Gov. Dannel P. Malloy, U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, U.S. Sen.-elect Christopher Murphy and U.S. Rep.-elect Elizabeth Esty.

DAWN HOCHSPRUNG

## Selfless principal ‘died a hero’

By Susan Tuz

WOODBURY — As hundreds of mourners for slain Sandy Hook Elementary School principal Dawn Hochsprung arrived for calling hours Wednesday, luminaries were on display, designed to spell a single word: Hope.

Hochsprung died at the school in an effort to stop 20-year-old Adam Lanza from embarking on his shooting spree Friday that claimed the lives of 20 students and six adults.

She has been hailed as a selfless educator whose dedication to her young charges is an inspiration to people around the world.

“I’m not even a little surprised that Dawn died a hero. Nobody was going to hurt one of her kids,” said Kim Gallo, a lifelong



friend and former colleague from Hochsprung’s years as an educator in Woodbury.

“I knew Dawn for 22 years,” said Brian Jones, of Southbury, a family friend. “Dawn set positive goals and met them. She had a positive, outgoing, energetic spirit. People loved to be around her. She’s a shining example of all that’s good and positive in the world.”

Coast Guard cadet Alexis Kanapp, 18, brought a handmade card from the seventh-graders of Woodbury. She’d known Hochsprung as her principal.

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy arrived to pay his respects and left shortly after 3 p.m. Newtown First Selectman Pat Llodra, Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton and former Danbury Mayor Gene Eriquez were among those attending.

CAROLINE PHOEBE PREVIDI, 6

## ‘Happy,’ ‘innocent,’ ‘wonderful’ girl

By Linda Conner Lambeck

NEWTOWN — Caroline Phoebe Prevodi, 6, was eulogized Wednesday as a sweet little child who loved to draw and loved to dance.

“She was happy. She was innocent. She danced everywhere she went,” said Pam Fehrs, her face tear-swollen as she left Saint Rose of Lima Church on Wednesday afternoon.

Fehrs daughters went to ballet and jazz class with Caroline, who was one of 20 children and six teachers murdered Friday at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

“It was very sad in there,” said Joan Fehrs, Pam’s mother. She said it was painful.

Many who came to the service wore green and white ribbons in tribute to the victims. Others wore pink, said to be Caroline’s favorite color.

Caroline was eulogized by her brother, Walker, a third grader and a Boy Scout. Some adults headed into the early afternoon service wore uniforms from the Scatacook District Connecticut Yankee Council, which includes Newtown.



Her parents, Jeffrey and Sandy, also spoke.

“They tried to remember happy things. There were a lot of good memories,” said Brian Smiffin, who works at a country club the family belonged to and where Caroline would swim. Her mom called her a precious angel.

Monsignor Robert Weiss told mourners that Caroline was probably the happiest addition to heaven in a long time.

“It is the hardest thing to deal with, you never would have thought we would be going to one of their funerals,” said Sean Farrell, who also worked at a country club.

“She was wonderful. At that age they are all wonderful,” said one of Caroline’s great aunts, who didn’t want to give her name. Caroline was described as sweet and beautiful, with an infectious smile.

Throughout the 90-minute service, nearly 50 police motorcycles were parked side by side in front and to the left of the church. They represented a dozen police departments including Trumbull, Milford, Hamden, Westport, Darien, Fairfield and Ossining, N.Y.

CHASE KOWALSKI, 7

## A baseball player’s ‘true love of life’

By Nanci G. Hutson

MONROE — Chase Kowalski’s 2012 “1st game ball” of the New York Yankees season sat in a collection of plastic-encased Yankee balls. There were also racing trophies and a baseball-theme frame of the 7-year-old baseball player, his name spelled out in crayon-color letters.

These mementos of a joyful boyhood were on display to commemorate Chase’s life.

One of the 20 Sandy Hook Elementary first-graders killed in the Newtown shooting, Chase was mourned Wednesday by hundreds of people from near and far who waited in lines that snaked around the entire parking lot at the Spadaccino and Leo P. Gallagher & Son Funeral Home.

In a statement, Chase’s family said: “Chase was an amazing son, brother, and grandson whose heart was only filled with love for all the people he touched. He was a fun-loving, energetic boy that had a true love of life. He completed his first triathlon at the age of six and ran in many



community road races. “Chase had a deep love for the game of baseball and enjoyed practicing with his father and teammates. Joining the Cub Scouts was just one of his many interests. He could often be found in the yard playing ball, riding his bike or quad.

“Chase was always excited to attend the kids work shop at the Trumbull Home Depot. He was greatly loved by his family. He joins his maternal uncle and grandfather, his paternal great grandmother and grandmother in a much better place.”

In all of the pictures of him, whether he’s leaping into a lake, running a race or riding his four-wheel quad, Chase wears the look of an adventurer, a closed-mouth smile in many and an open-mouthed grin in others that shows off his missing teeth.

Music piped into the funeral parlor included the Toy Story tune “You’ve got a friend in me.”

“It’s just tragic,” said one West Haven man, wondering how families and the community can ever be the same.



## TRAGEDY IN NEWTOWN



Scott Mullin/For Hearst Connecticut Newspapers

Members of the audience listen to speakers talk about the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting victims during the Tribute to Newtown program at the O'Neill Center at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury on Wednesday.

# At Danbury event, thousands recall shooting victims

By John Pirro

DANBURY — “We all feel like our hearts have been ripped out of our lives, like we’ve all lost a child,” said Jean Gallagher, of Brookfield. “So we’re all just gathered together to try and make some sense out of it.”

On Wednesday night, some 3,000 people whose hearts were ripped out last Friday gathered to remember 20 first-graders and six faculty members slaughtered at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown and send their thoughts and prayers to a community that will be forever scarred by

those deaths.

For 90 minutes, the cavernous O’Neill Center at Western Connecticut State University echoed with the harmonious voices of children, the comforting words of clergymen, and the spontaneous applause of the audience when the singers and speakers sounded notes that, at least for a moment, filled the void left by what one person called “the indescribable tragedy.”

The “Tribute to Newtown,” organized by members of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials, may not have helped people make sense of why 20-year-old

Adam Lanza did what he did. But the program did at least provide some temporary relief for many still reeling from his actions.

“Our residents were asking for something,” said New Fairfield First Selectman John Hodge.

Among the guests were Newtown First Selectman Pat Llodra and Superintendent of Schools Janet Robinson, who drew warm applause when they were introduced.

“In Newtown, we truly believe that at 9:45 Friday morning, 20 new angels burst through the gates of heaven, shepherded by six teachers trying to corral them,” Llodra said.

The crowd also reacted emotionally to the civil rights anthem, “We Shall Overcome,” which took on a different meaning when it was performed by Danbury’s Rogers Park Middle School Choir, and when a recording of Israel Kamakawiwo’ole’s version of “Somewhere over the Rainbow” played as photos of the 20 youngest victims were flashed on a screen over the stage.

The event was hosted by Western, which university President James Schmutter noted also suffered losses in the shootings.

Two people with connections to Western were victims. Noted

jazz saxophonist Jimmy Greene, an assistant professor of music, lost his daughter, Ana Grace Marquez-Greene, 6, and Ann Marie Murphy, who was a teacher’s aide at Sandy Hook, was the mother of nursing student Thomas Murphy, Schmutter said.

“I think as a community, it made us feel better,” said Gianna Fiorentini, a kindergarten teacher from Wilton. “It’s not ever going to go away, but it helped make me strong enough to face my kids tomorrow.”

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# High school basketball game restores small bit of normalcy

By Kevin Duffy

NEWTOWN — It was, as Newtown High principal Charles DuMais put it, a tiny piece of normal: Longtime rivals Newtown and Masuk, in a December South-West Conference girls basketball clash.

The Nighthawks pressed; the Panthers turned it over. The crowd was strong, but not overwhelming, plenty of seats available behind the Newtown bench. The Nighthawks’ dance team performed at the half. English teacher Jay Edwards — the voice of Newtown High athletics — provided the play-by-play throughout the Nighthawks’ 64-44 victory.

Jeremy O’Connell, the always-fiery Newtown head coach, pleaded with his team on an early third-quarter possession: “Please! Play! Defense!” he screamed, his tie flapping as he hopped along the Nighthawks sideline.

This is the way Newtown High

wanted it. They wanted normalcy Wednesday, if only for an hour and a half, five days after 20 students and six faculty members were shot and killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

“We got to run, we got to get our minds, our frustration out of us a little,” Newtown senior Erin Kenning said. “It was just important for us to be here today.”

The empty seats, one coach said, shouldn’t be a surprise. People in this town are still in shock. Most don’t want to leave home. If they do, they’re bombarded by national media, microphones and cameras shoved in their faces at the local Stop & Shop or Mobil station.

Athletic Director Gregg Simon kept the media circus at bay Wednesday, only allowing local outlets into the Hawks Nest, where the walls were blanketed with cutouts of stick figures linking arms, every so often interrupted by a “SH” for Sandy Hook. A banner

— Newtown strong — was placed just below the scoreboard. And 26 balloons — 20 of them white, six green, Sandy Hook Elementary’s colors — were along the sidelines.

Each was a reminder of the tragedy that took place.

“Basketball is really trivial in what is going on, and really insignificant in life,” O’Connell said. “But it is a positive place where this town has seen a lot of positive things.”

A tight game in the third quarter turned into a blowout, something Newtown fans and students have become accustomed to in recent years. Senior guard Cassie Ekstrom muscled through for a layup with four minutes remaining, putting the Nighthawks up 14 and prompting O’Connell to pump both fists, his signature celebration.

After the win, Newtown’s first of the young season, O’Connell reminded his team, “Hey, practice



Jason Rearick/Staff photographer

Twenty-six balloons are displayed during the Newtown High School girls basketball game against Masuk Wednesday. For more coverage of the game, see Page B1.

from 6-8 tomorrow,” part of the usual routine.

“School hasn’t been normal,” Kenning said. “But it’s the best

we can do right now.”

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NEWS

COLLECTIVE STRENGTH AT NORWALK VIGIL



Christian Abraham/Staff photographer

A candlelight vigil was held to remember the Newtown massacre victims at Norwalk Community College on Tuesday. Speaking at the podium is NCC's Student Body President Ben Engel.

NCC community: 'Seize this opportunity to change'

By Nancy Guenther Chapman

Change must come in the wake of last week's tragic slaughter, Norwalk Community College students and administrators said Tuesday evening, vowing to work to make that happen as they lit the night with candles in front of the school.

"I am sure many of you have been consumed with what happened in Newtown Friday," NCC President David L. Levinson said. "We here have the collective strength, one not only to come together and mourn, and comfort one another, but also to work on a solution."

The theme was repeated several times in the vigil organized by the college's student government.

"We will compound the tragedy of Sandy Hook if we don't seize this opportunity to change," said NCC Provost Jean Pamela Edington. "We have a responsibility to take action to make our society less violent and to protect our children."

Student body president Ben Engel said the gathering warmed his heart. He said everyone there should reach out to friends, family and "children, especially those living in or near Newtown, who are being forced to face a fierce reality and need our support the most."

Life is "a collection of seconds," student Ryan Pappola, said.

"Seconds that you don't get back, that may change, that you hope to hold on to. Never stop trying to rise above. Take this moment, this feeling, make it mean something. We only get one shot at this. So live, in every sense of the word."



Nasir Dean, 5, helps his mom, Victoria, hold a candle during a vigil to remember the Newtown shooting victims at Norwalk Community College on Tuesday.

EXPLOITING TRAGEDY

Officials warn about charity scams

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Connecticut officials are warning state residents about possible charity scams seeking to exploit the elementary school shootings in Newtown.

State Attorney General George Jepsen and Consumer Protection Commissioner William Rubenstein urged people on Wednesday to be careful about donating to charities that claim to benefit victims of Friday's shootings, which left 20 children, six staff members and the shooter dead.

Rubenstein says there are many people and groups not registered as charities in the state who are soliciting donations online for the Newtown victims.

No scams have been identified yet, but Rubenstein says some solicitors may not be legit. Officials are reviewing the solicitations.

Officials are advising people to donate only to well-known charities, to be extra cautious with email and phone solicitations and not write checks to individuals.

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STATE

Raises urged for judges

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARTFORD — A state commission on judges' salaries is recommending 5.3 percent pay raises in each of the next four fiscal years, a proposal expected to face scrutiny as the state lawmakers grapple with a budget deficit.

The Commission on Judicial Compensation approved its recommendations to the legislature Tuesday, noting that state judges' pay hasn't increased since 2007.

The plan would increase Superior Court judges pay from about \$146,800 to nearly \$180,500 over the four years. Supreme Court justices' pay would increase from about \$162,500 to nearly \$200,000. Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers would see her salary increase from about \$175,650 to \$215,950.

The state is facing projected deficits of \$365 million to \$415 million in this year's \$20 billion state budget and \$1.2 billion in next year's.

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